Vol. VIII. Numb. 68

THE OBSERVATOR.

The Obſervator's *Vindication againſt ſome Complaints that he has expreſs'd ſo much Concern for the* Palatines, *and ſo little for our own Poor. Advice to the Complainers about putting the Laws in Execution againſt Regretters, Foreſtallers, and Brokers, who grind the Faces of our Poor, now that the Price of Bread is ſo high. Conſiderations on the Cruelty of Creditors, and the Cheats of Debtors, with ſome Hints for laying the Caſe before the Parliament, in order to relieve the Oppreſs'd, to puniſh the Fraudulent, and to prevent ſuch Practices for Time to come; together with the Cruelty and Tricks of Goal-Keepers. On an Advertiſement to have Sir* A. Crowley *choſen Alderman of* Queen-Hithe-*Ward.*

From **Wednesday**, September 21. to **Saturday**, September 24. 1709.

Country-m. HEre's a Couple of Letters for you, Maſter, or rather a large Packet; for one of them is above two Sheets of Paper, cloſe writ on all Sides.

Obſ. What are they, *Roger?* The Gentleman who wrote the firſt, ſeems to be Maſter of more Time than you and I; therefore I hope what he has writ, is well digeſted.

Country-m. They are both upon one Subject, Maſter, and complain, that you have ſhew'd more Concern for the *Palatines*, than for our own Poor.

Obſ. That ſhews they have not attentively read what I ſaid upon the Subject, *Roger.* I argu'd for our own Poor, and propos'd, that according to the Practice of the *Dutch*, Methods ſhould be thought on to provide Work for thoſe who are able, and Maintenance for thoſe who are not; and I urg'd again and again, that the Pariſh-Rates, which amount annually to a great Sum in *England*, ſhould for that End be put into common Stocks, in the Hands of truſty Perſons, and not left to be guzzl'd down, and eat up by Church-wardens, as is practis'd in too many Places. I likewiſe propos'd the Improvement of our Fiſhery, and gave Inſtances to prove, that this alone, if manag'd as the *Dutch* do theirs, would employ all our idle Hands by Water or Land, the more robuſt Sort in Catching and Curing, the Weaker in making Nets, Cordage, and Tackling, abundance of our Mechanicks in Iron, and Timber-work, neceſſary for Shipping, a great many others in Carriage by Land and Water, Women and Children in making Caps, Stockings, and Linnen for our Fiſher-men. And beſides, 'twould ſet great Numbers at Work in improving Land by Agriculture and Paſturage, to furniſh Proviſions for thoſe employ'd in Fiſhing, Curing, carrying, making Tackle, and building Ships and Boats; moſt of which being laborious Work, that creates a good Appetite, and brings Money into the Hands of thoſe ſo employ'd, would mightily increaſe and incourage the Conſumption, both of our native and imported Commodities; upon which I ſhall, God willing, take an Opportunity to enlarge; but by the Hints I have given already, it appears thoſe Gentlemen are in the Wrong, to charge me as they do.

Country-m. He who writes the ſhorter Letter is very angry, Maſter, and wonders you are not afraid to write as you do for the *Palatines*, as if we had no Poor of our own.

Obſ. It would ſeem that Perſon reads, as there are others who hear, *Roger*, that is to ſay, with one Side of his Head. I have given an Eſtimate from the beſt Authors who have writ on that Subject, of the great Numbers of our Poor, that they are much increas'd ſince thoſe Gentlemen wrote, by the Decay of our Trade, and a tedious, expenſive, and bloody War. I have mention'd the miſerable Condition of the Wives and Children of thoſe who ſerve their Country by Sea and Land, in order to excite the publick Compaſſion for their Relief. I have often mention'd the Hardſhips put upon our Sea-men, and the diſtreſs'd Condition of their Wives, Children, Widows, and Fatherleſs, for want of their Pay, the Tricks put upon them by Queries, Runs, and other Delays, and the Expence, Trouble, and other Inconveniencies which attend their being pay'd at the reſpective Ports where they embark; whereas it would be more for the Advantage of the Nation and themſelves, were they pay'd when they come Home, as was practis'd in the Parliament Times. Of all this the Publick can bear me Witneſs, *Roger*; ſo that thoſe Gentlemen are much in the Wrong to me.

Country-m. And ſo they are as to the *Palatines*, Maſter; for tho' you expreſs'd ſuch a Concern for thoſe deſolate Strangers, as every good Man ought to do, and gave them the Preference, becauſe of their preſſing Circumſtances, which muſt have immediately deſtroy'd them, had not the Government generouſly prevented it, by a preſent Relief, yet you always ſpoke againſt imploying them in any Thing that might take the Bread out of the Mouths of our own Poor, or be prejudicial to the meaner Sort of our Traders, who muſt maintain themſelves and their Families by the Sweat of their Faces; therefore you propos'd the ſettling of thoſe People in Colonies, where they might improve our waſte Ground, live together like Chriſtians, and on the Fruits of their own Labour, without being a conſtant Burden to the Nation: And you have, from Time to Time, hinted at the ill Conſequences which might attend their being diſpos'd of otherwiſe, and at the Practices of the Faction, who, to the utmoſt of their Power, have obſtructed their being ſo ſettl'd. You likewiſe propos'd the ſending back of ſuch as were Papiſts by Paſs-Ports which is accordingly ſet on Foot.

Obſ. The Publick muſt bear us Witneſs as to all this, *Roger.* But in the mean Time, I take the Liberty to ſay, that had we of this Nation been as generous as the Parliament of *Ireland*, and other Gentlemen of that Country, in Proportion to our Ability, all this Clamour about the *Palatines* might have been over long ago; whereas now there are ſtill Multitudes of 'em, who muſt unavoidably periſh, if the Charity of private Perſons don't prevent it, until ſuch Time as the Legiſlature can provide otherwiſe for them.

Country-m. The Gentleman who writes the ſhorter Letter, Maſter, complains, that you take no Notice of the greateſt Oppreſſion of all, which is, that our Corn is exported by Ship-Loads, while hundreds of our Poor want both Bread and Work, and the Corn riſes ſo much, that many of 'em are not able to purchaſe a Loaf with their ſmall Earnings for their ſtarving Families; which occations our Priſons to be fill'd by Tally-men, and others, who put their poor Creditors in Goal for inconſiderable Sums, and the Brokers will not lend Money upon any Thing, they are ſo full already, as they pretend; ſo that the Poor will be reduc'd to a miſerable Condition, as the cold Seaſon advances, if God in his Mercy don't prevent it.

Obſ. This Gentleman is like too many others, *Roger*,

ger, that would have you and me be their Pack-horſes and carry all their Burdens, while they will do nothing themſelves. Don't they know, that we have very good Laws againſt Foreſtalling, Regretting, and Extortion? Why don't they complain to the Juſtices, and other Magiſtrates in their reſpective Diſtricts, againſt ſuch as are guilty of thoſe Practices, in order to have them puniſh'd according to Law? And if that will not do, let them imploy Men of publick Spirits to draw up a Repreſentation of thoſe Grievances, and put it into the Hands of their Members againſt next Seſſion of Parliament, in order to a Redreſs. In the mean Time, if they ſend any Thing to me that's proper to be publiſh'd, and founded on Reaſon, they ſhall find, that I ſhall not be wanting to prepare the Way for them, as well as I can.

Country-m. We muſt now ſay ſomething to the long Letter, Maſter, the Writer of which ſeems to be a Perſon of more Temper and Thought, and to have digeſted his Notions better, tho' now and then he gives too much Rein to his Paſſion. He complains terribly of the Multitude of our poor Priſoners for Debt, and the Barbarity of their Creditors, who will neither be content with all that the poor Wretches have, nor let them enjoy their Liberty, to earn Bread for themſelves and their Families, but cruelly ſhut them up in Goals to ſtarve and rot, while their Families are left deſtitute, and either come to the Pariſh, or take unlawful and wicked Methods for a Subſiſtance; therefore he propoſes, that a Law ſhould be made to prevent ſuch Diſorders, according to the Cuſtoms of other wiſe Nations, and that the Creditors ſhould either be oblig'd to maintain thoſe poor Debtors in Priſon, or upon a faithful Surrender of all, let them have their Liberty to earn their Bread, with ſuch a Proportion of Cloths, Houſhold-Goods, and Stock, if they have any left, as may put 'em in a Condition to fall immediately to work, and not ſuffer them to ſtarve in Goals, without Bread, Cloths, or Beds; which is enough to bring a Contagion, as well as a Curſe upon the Kingdom, is a Diſhonour to our excellent Government, and an indelible Reproach upon our holy Religion; on both which Accounts we value our ſelves above all the World, tho' our Practices give our Pretenſions the Lie, and expoſe us to the general Contempt of *Chriſtendom*, as a cruel and hypocritical Nation.

Obſ. I am ſenſible there's too much Truth in what the Gentleman ſays, *Roger*; but the Point is intricate and nice, and has hitherto been too hard for the Wiſdom of our Legiſlative and Executive Power, both which have been baffl'd by the unmerciful Temper of Creditors on the one Hand, and the notorious Cheats and Tricks of Debtors on the other; for many of them break on Purpoſe, and run into Credit, that they may either riot in the *Fleet* and *Queen's-Bench*, &c. on the Spoils of their Creditors, or force them to a ſcandalous Compoſition, and then ſet up again, and live as high as ever; ſo that there's Faults on both ſides. There's no Man who has had any Dealings in the World, but muſt own the Truth of this, *Roger*; which is owing to that general Decay of Probity, too viſible among us. One of the beſt Ways I can think on at preſent to prevent this, is, that that Gentleman, and others, who are fully appriz'd of the Caſe, would draw it up to be laid before the Parliament, that they may appoint a Committee of their own Number, Men of known Probity and Underſtanding, ſome of them to be Lawyers and Traders, to enquire into all the Priſons about Town, where Debtors are confin'd; and that Perſons of the like Qualifications may be appointed to make the like Enquiries through the Iſland, and make their Report to the Houſe, that ſuch as are really oppreſs'd, may have preſent Relief; ſuch as are guilty of Cheating, may be duly puniſh'd, and the Cruelty of Creditors, and the Fraud of Debtors prevented for the future. At the ſame Time, *Roger*, I believe 'twill be found very neceſſary to enquire into the Practices of the Goal-keepers, of whoſe ſavage Cruelty in grinding the Faces of their poor Priſoners, making them pay Extortion for every Thing they want; giving thoſe who are able to pay for it, an undue Liberty; and forcing Bonds from others, ſtill to be anſwerable for their Debts, or hinder their being ſet at Liberty by ſome knaviſh Trick, when either the Law, or Charity of well-diſpos'd Perſons has laid down a Method for it. We have had many loud Complaints; but more of theſe Things, and of the Gentleman's long Letter, another Time, *Roger*.

Country-m. Here's a ſtrange Advertiſement, Maſter, about the Election of an Alderman for *Queen-Hithe*-ward, ſign'd by *John Midgley*, owning, that he has receiv'd 450 *l.* to give every one that polls for Sir *Ambroſe Crowley* to be Alderman of that Ward, a Chaldron of good Coals *Gratis*, half a Chaldron to every one that ſhall not poll againſt him, and a Chaldron to every one that polls for Sir *Benjamin Green* and Sir *Ambroſe* jointly, tho' they have already engag'd for Sir *Benjamin*; and that the Remainder of the Money ſhall be laid out in a Clock, Dial, or otherwiſe, as the Common-Council-men of the Ward ſhall think fit; but all this on Condition, that Sir *Ambroſe* be the Alderman: Which to me ſeems the more ſtrange, Maſter, becauſe 'tis ſaid in the Beginning of the Advertiſement, that treating at Taverns for Aldermen, has of late very much prevail'd, is an evil and pernicious Cuſtom, and engages many unwarily to give their Votes, which Sir *Ambroſe* thinks to be of dangerous Conſequence to the Freedom of Elections, and yet at the ſame Time, here's 450 *l.* laid down by him, to bribe the Votes of the Ward, by giving Coals to the Electors, or ſuch of the Poor as they ſhall think fit. Pray, Maſter, give me your Opinion of this Matter.

Obſ. Opinion, *Roger*! I'm ſorry you didn't tell me this ſooner. I look upon it to be one of the moſt audacious Attempts upon our Conſtitution that ever was made, for at this Rate, the Queen is not ſafe on her Throne, nor the meaneſt Peaſant in his Cottage. The Criminals themſelves own the Practice to be of dangerous Conſequence, ſo that they are condemn'd out of their own Mouths, and there's no need of farther Evidence. In ſhort, *Roger*, I do think this Advertiſement as great a Reflexion upon the City of *London*, as that of *Jugurtha* was upon *Rome*, viz. *That the Town was to be ſold, and might quickly be ruin'd, if any one would be at the Charge of the Purchaſe.* Therfore, I hope the City will, for their own Honour, enjoin their Members to lay it before the Parliament; for this is directly laying a Train to blow up our Conſtitution at once, which is a ſufficient Alarm for every Man to look to himſelf; the Freedom of Election is the Foundation of *Britiſh* Liberty; and if Kings have been turn'd out for attempting it, ſhall Subjects eſcape? Let it never be ſaid, *Roger*. Whoever is guilty of doing ſo, be he *Whig*, or *Tory*, he deſerves no more Mercy at the Hands of Juſtice, than *Guy Faux* did. In the mean Time, I am glad to hear, that the Citizens of the Ward have teſtify'd their Reſentments ſo juſtly, as to hiſs ſuch a Candidate off the Stage.

Advertiſements.

On Monday next will be publiſh'd,

☞ A Collection of miſcellaneous Poems. In twelve Parts. Conſiſting of all Sorts of Poetry, as Odes, Songs, Satyrs, Epiſtles, Elegies, Epigrams, Paſtorals, Dialogues, Prologues, Epilogues, &c. chiefly compos'd by the beſt Hands, viz. Dr. Garth, Dr. Baynard, Dr. King, Dr. Browne, Capt. Phillips, Capt. Steel, Mr. Rowe, Mr. Smith, Mr. Den, Mr. Gildon, Mr. Pittis, Mr. Ward, Mr. Dyke, Mr. Green, Mr. Hawke, and ſeveral other Authors of Eminency. Sold by B. Bragge in Pater-Noſter-Row, and J. Woodward in Threadneedle-Street, near the Royal Exchange.

☞ Hudibras Redivivus; or, a Burleſque Poem on the various Humours of Town and Country. In 24 Parts. By the Author of the London-Spy. Sold by J. Woodward in Threadneedle-ſtreet, near the Royal Exchange, and J. Baker at the Black Boy in Pater-Noſter-Row.

☞ The Circus; or, Britiſh Olympicks, a Satyr on the Ring in Hide-Park. Sold by J. Baker, at the Black Boy in Pater-Noſter-Row. Price 6 d.

☞ Canary-Birds naturaliz'd in Utopia. A Canto. Dulce eſt paternum ſolum. Sold by J. Morphew near Stationers-hall. Price 6 d.

☞ The Scourge of Venus and Mercury, repreſented in a Treatiſe of the Venereal Diſeaſe; together with an Appendix in anſwer to Mr. John Marten's Reflexions thereupon. By J. Sintelaer, Practitioner in Phyſick, and Author of the Royal Decoction. Price of the Appendix alone bound 6d, together 3s. 6d. Sold by J. Helms in Weſtminſter-hall, R. Gosling at the Mitre in Fleet-ſtreet, W. Carter at the Green Dragon in St. Paul's Church-yard, J. Phillips at the black Bull in Cornhill, H. Ribotteau at the Crown near Cecil-ſtreet in the Strand, B. Picard at the 3 Bibles in the Minories, J. Harding in St. Martins-lane near Long-acre, J. Morphew near Stationers-hall, and by the Author at his Dwelling-houſe (late the Duke of Leeds's) in high Holborn, over against little Turn-ſtile.

☞ Juſt publiſh'd, ☜

QUACKERY UNMASK'D, being a rational and effectual Anſwer to Mr. Marten's Treatiſe of the Venereal Diſeaſe, its Appendix, (for publiſhing which, as appears by the Gazette of the 30th of July, he now ſtands indicted) and the charitable Surgeon. Sold (Price 18 d.) by D. Brown without Temple-Bar, G. Strahan in Cornhill, J. Woodward in St. Chriſtopher's Church-yard, B. Barker in Weſtminſter-hall, Booksellers; and by the Author, Dr. Spinke, at his Houſe, the Golden Ball in the dark Paſſage, three Doors beyond the Sun Tavern in Honey-Lane Market, Cheapſide. Where alſo may be had, ☞ ANTIVENEREAL-PILLS, &c. (the moſt powerful Medicines for that Diſeaſe yet known) Price 3 s the Box, with Directions.

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